

Did you know...



For babies and toddlers, talking about and playing with shapes is the first stage of recognizing letters.

Babies and toddlers are trying to make sense of their world and one way they do this is to look, taste, listen to, and feel objects. This helps them sort the objects into categories, such as round objects/soft objects; and to tell one object from another, such as a blanket from a ball. Once they are toddlers, they can begin learning about shapes and colors.

Children who recognize shapes and are able to tell the difference between them have an easier time learning about letters.

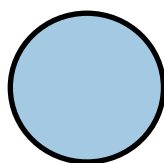
Level 1

Point out shapes around the house



Level 2

Teach names of shapes



Level 3

Look for shapes in letters

Q P
q p

Here's how...

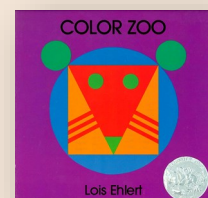


- ❖ Read shape books together. There are a wide variety of shape board books to interest your child.
- ❖ Go on a scavenger hunt to look for shapes around the house or in the community. Take a box or bag and collect round things, long things, blue things, etc.
- ❖ Point out shapes in familiar objects. "Your sandwich is a square shape. See, it has four straight sides, 1-2-3-4."

Read



Color Zoo, by Lois Ehlert



This book takes nine shapes and nine animals, and 16 shades of color to create a color zoo. Bright, basic designs on each page stand out so children can identify shapes in an all new way.

Lois Ehlert has written over 50 books for children! The simple pictures and bright shapes make her books great for sharing with babies and toddlers. Check out some of her other books at your local library.



Choosing Books



More books about shapes...

Baby's Shapes, by Karen Katz
Brown Rabbit's Shape Book, by Alan Baker
Mouse Shapes, by Ellen Stoll Walsh
My Very First Book of Shapes, by Eric Carle
The Shape of Things, by Dayle Ann Dodds
Shapes, Shapes, Shapes, by Tana Hoban
Wild! Shapes (Bilingual edition), by Courtney Dicmas



Shape books typically do not have a lot of words. As you read with your baby/toddler, use describing words and trace with your finger, or help your toddler trace the shapes with his finger. Point to the pictures and make a connection to your child's world. "Look, here is a picture frame. The frame is a square. It is the same shape as the picture by your bed. Can you see it?"

Ready to Write



Learning shapes is one of the basic skills children need to know before they learn letters of the alphabet. Big body movements help children learn how shapes are drawn. Place masking or painter's tape in different shapes on the floor. Help your children walk on the lines and name the shape as they do it. "You are walking on a square" (or circle, rectangle, etc.). "Let's count the sides as you walk on them...1, 2, 3, 4."

Play



Patty Cake

Patty cake, patty cake, baker's man.
(clap baby's hands in rhythm to rhyme)
Bake me a cake as fast as you can.

Roll it,
(roll baby's hands around each other)
Pat it,
(clap baby's hands)
Mark it with a "B"
(trace letter B on baby's tummy)

And throw it in the oven
for Baby and Me!
(raise baby's arms above her head)



Song for Toddlers

Sing to the tune of "Farmer in the Dell"

Mary is wearing blue,
Oh Mary is wearing blue.
Hi-ho the derry-o, Mary is wearing blue.
Mommy is wearing red,
Oh Mommy is wearing red.
Hi-ho the derry-o, Mommy is wearing red.

Continue with other names and colors.

Rhyme for Babies

Wiggle baby's fingers and toes

Fingers and toes, fingers and toes.

Here are you fingers,
And here are your toes.

Wiggle your fingers,
Wiggle your toes.

Here are your fingers,
And here are your toes.

Wave with your fingers,
Wave with your toes.

Here are your fingers,
And here are your toes!



At your library...



Idaho libraries are here to help you during the pandemic. In-person service depends on local health guidelines; however, most libraries offer pick-up service, online service, or 24-hour service, such as free Wi-Fi. If you don't have your library's website URL, use the Idaho library locator at <https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-directory/>.